

Discussion Paper on the Role, Composition, and ToR for the PEI Technical Advisory Group

Prepared as background to the TAG meeting in Durban on Thursday,
22nd May.

Background

A few months into the Scale-up of the UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative, contributing donors and some key implementation partners joined the PEI for a first informal meeting in November 2007. The aim of this meeting was to establish a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The original purpose of the TAG was to “provide strategic advice to the Management Board of the PEI and to the management of the Poverty-Environment Facility”. At that meeting, some donor governments expressed interest in having a stakeholders meeting instead, focused on accountability issues, including delivery of results. The Donor Steering Group (DSG) was formed and met in Brussels in 2008 for the first time. TAG then concentrated on technical support, and went on to hold subsequent meetings in 2011 (Vienna), 2012 (Ochra) and 2013 (Berlin).

The current ToR for TAG were formulated in 2010 and may be summarized thus:

1 Strategic advice:

- Advise on strategy and (global, regional and national) implementation based inter alia, on PEI Annual Progress Reports, the upcoming mid-term review (MTR), previous PEI evaluations and other relevant donor evaluation plus continuing dialogue between PEI and TAG representatives.
- Share ideas and assist in the development of proposals for a post-2012 PEI.

2 Knowledge management and technical support:

- Advise on the knowledge management and technical support activities undertaken by the PEF.
- Advise on technical thematic issues and/or tools and their role within the PEI (e.g. integrated ecosystem assessments, economic assessments, economic policy instruments, public expenditure reviews, budgeting, climate change).
- Share lessons learned by the various members field of expertise.
- Advise on possible “peer review” options for specific PEI activities or outputs (e.g. knowledge products) at global, regional or country levels.

3 Technical coordination:

- Keep members informed of other ongoing initiatives of relevance to PEI and suggest ways of building synergies with these

- Advise on relevant PEP and wider initiatives (Rio + 20)
- Advise on future membership of the TAG

4 Monitoring and evaluation:

- Advise on proposed improvements in monitoring and reporting arrangements by the PEI to donors
- Advise on specific monitoring and evaluation exercises (e.g. agree responsibilities for MTR and final evaluation of the PEI)

TAG as support to PEI transitioning

Some of these areas of input, notably on M&E, have been successfully completed, and PEI now has an improved M&E system based in part on ideas and inputs received from TAG members. Now, as PEI enters a new (and potentially last, as a “formal programme”) phase, 2013-2017, it is timely to review the work of TAG, formulate a new vision for the group, and agree upon an expanded and/or amended team composition to help secure the inputs required for continued PEI success in the new phase, and beyond.

Key elements of the new phase of PEI include:

- Strengthened focus on poverty and poverty assessment;
- Strengthened focus on economics: use of assessments, beyond GDP, natural wealth accounting;
- Enhanced networking and new partnerships;
- Ever stronger One UN approach
- Sustained climate change mainstreaming including in relation to urban areas;
- Greater emphasis on social equity, rights-based approach, and gender mainstreaming;
- Preparation of Sustainability Strategy for post-2017.

PEI will also pay particular attention during this phase to the integration of PE concerns and objectives into partner organisations’ strategies, programmes and policies, aiming to assist this wherever requested through the provision of lessons learnt, knowledge management, inputs into training packages, and others. This was first discussed during the Berlin TAG meeting (2013) and will be taken forward in Durban (2014).

Future Role of TAG

PEI suggests that the overall role of TAG continue as before, namely that through remote means and b meeting face-to-face once per year, and coordinated and facilitated by the TAG secretary, the TAG supports implementation of PEI through:

- Specialist inputs in relevant technical areas upon demand (in previous years – monitoring and evaluation; in future to include likely poverty/inequality, beyond GDP/natural accounting and others to be determined)
- Peer review and comments to key PEI programmatic materials, publications and documents (in previous years – review of PEI Global Prodoc, review of Stories of Change; in future to include the Revised PE Handbook, and others to be determined)
- Networking and linkages support to ensure good institutional visibility for PEI, connectivities to relevant programmes for synergies and joint opportunities; and
- Strategic advice concerning new directions, new best practices, and emerging trends around the poverty-environment-climate (mainstreaming) nexus and green economy, including on the preparation of a PEI Sustainability Strategy in particular, and, where appropriate on the integration of PE and PEI lessons learnt into donor/partner strategies, programmes and policies.

Way Forward

It would be therefore logical that the TAG composition and role reflect these new emphases. Subject to and following on from a discussion in Durban, therefore, PEI proposes to ask existing TAG members to:

- Discuss and agree to the proposed amended role and composition;
- Brainstorm concrete ways to make this happen (e.g. formation of peer review groups, or thematic sub-groups, with “between-meetings” inputs and work for identifying areas of PEI for strengthened programming)
- Identify potential new members in the areas of relevance, so that PEI may reach out to them and create a renewed, strengthened TAG to support renewed, strengthened PE mainstreaming implementation to 2017, and beyond.

After Durban

Minutes from the Durban TAG meeting will include the relevant conclusions and recommendations, after which PEI (TAG Secretary) will contact prospective new TAG members and set out a route map for activities, future meetings, and the like for the next 2 years.